# Australia’s implementation of G20 actions to support world trade and investment response to COVID-19

The Australian Government collective actions updated August 2021

## 1. Short-term collective actions

### 1.1 Trade Regulation

#### Item 1.1.1

##### G20 commitment

Ensure that any emergency trade measures designed to tackle COVID-19, including export restrictions on vital medical supplies and equipment and other essential goods and services, if deemed necessary, are targeted, proportionate, transparent, temporary, reflect our interest in protecting the most vulnerable, do not create unnecessary barriers to trade or disruption to global supply chains, and are consistent with WTO rules.

##### Australia’s response

In March 2020, the Australian Government announced temporary export controls to limit the hoarding, non-commercial export and profiteering of personal protective equipment and disinfectants that contribute to controlling and preventing the spread of COVID 19. The measures were implemented in response to instances of individuals and criminal syndicates purchasing such products in bulk from retail outlets, with the intent of profiteering. The government’s measures were transparent, targeted, proportionate, and time-limited to address threats to the supply of key goods. The measures were repealed in December 2020 following a government review which determined the measures had fulfilled their purpose.

The Australian Government removed customs duties for eligible medical and hygiene goods imported between February 2020 and June 2022.

#### Item 1.1.2

##### G20 commitment

Refrain from introducing export restrictions on agricultural products, including on products purchased for non-commercial humanitarian purposes, and avoid unnecessary food-stockpiling, without prejudice to domestic food security, consistent with national requirements.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government has not introduced any export restrictions on agricultural products and does not engage in unnecessary stockpiling of food.

The Government co-sponsored the “Joint Statement on Agriculture Export Prohibitions or Restrictions relating to the World Food Programme” in the World Trade Organization in January 2021. Through this statement the Australian Government committed to not imposing export prohibitions or restrictions on foodstuffs purchased for non-commercial humanitarian purposes by the World Food Programme.

#### Item 1.1.3

##### G20 commitment

Consider exempting humanitarian aid related to COVID-19 from any export restrictions on exports of essential medical supplies, medical equipment, and personal protective equipment, consistent with national requirements.

##### Australia’s response

In March 2020, the Australian Government introduced a targeted, temporary measure to prevent profiteering behaviour and non-commercial exports of personal protective equipment (PPE), alcohol wipes and hand sanitiser. The Government designed this measure to enable legitimate commercial trade and humanitarian consignments to continue.

### 1.2 Trade Facilitation

#### Item 1.2.1

##### G20 commitment

Accelerate the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, to the extent possible, particularly the provisions which are especially critical during the pandemic, such as Article 7.1 (Pre-arrival processing), Article 7.3 (Separation of release from final determination of customs duties, taxes, fees, and charges), and Article 7.8 (Expedited shipment).

##### Australia’s response

Australia already complies with the terms of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and has designated a National Committee on Trade Facilitation as required under the Agreement. We continue to support developing countries to implement the Agreement through funding to the World Bank’s Trade Facilitation Support Program, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility, and the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation.

#### Item 1.2.2

##### G20 commitment

Speed up and streamline customs procedures, in line with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and encourage the use of electronic documentation and processes, where possible and practical, including use of smart applications.

##### Australia’s response

The Department of Home Affairs and the Australian Border Force continued to promote legitimate two-way trade through the ongoing implementation of the Australian Trusted Trader (ATT) program and during the COVID-19 outbreak, ATT has helped to keep supply chains moving across Australian borders. Trusted Trader is a free and voluntary program that accredits Australian businesses with compliant trade practices and a secure international supply chain. Once accredited, businesses have access to a growing range of benefits that can simplify their customs processes.

The Australian Government set up a Simplified Trade System Implementation Taskforce to review international trade regulations, modernise outdated ICT systems and encourage electronic documentation and processes where possible.

#### Item 1.2.3

##### G20 commitment

Reduce sanitary and technical barriers by encouraging greater use of relevant existing international standards and ensuring access of information on relevant standards is not a barrier to enabling production of PPE and medical supplies.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government’s National Measurement Institute, together with the other members of the Government’s national standards and conformance network (Standards Australia, NATA and JAS-ANZ), have released advice on standards, test methods, accredited laboratories, and certifiers to assist with the design, manufacture, and procurement of medical PPE.

[National Measurement Institute helping industry respond to COVID-19 | Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources](https://www.industry.gov.au/news/national-measurement-institute-helping-industry-respond-to-covid-19)

#### Item 1.2.4

##### G20 commitment

Share necessary information within the G20 regarding medical suppliers, as appropriate and according with applicable national legislation, to facilitate trade deals.

##### Australia’s response

Developed by Australia’s Advanced Manufacturing Growth Centre (AMGC), the COVID-19 Manufacturer Response Register was launched to bring together Australian manufacturers, suppliers, and customers via a self-managed platform. Manufacturers have registered and are using the Response Register to match supply with demand. The platform can be accessed at amgc.org.au

#### Item 1.2.5

##### G20 commitment

Encourage G20 Ministers of Economy and Ministers of Industry to expand production capacity for medical devices and components and personal protective equipment, consistent with public health guidance.

##### Australia’s response

As international supply chains came under strain during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government worked with industry, health care providers and the states and territories to source supplies from overseas and scale up local manufacture. The Australian Manufacturing Fund for PPE has been established to stimulate business investment in new technologies and processes in the manufacturing sector. The National Medical Stockpile (NMS) focused on addressing market shortages including expanding or establishing domestic production of PPE and essential goods.

Australia’s federal science and research agencies, including the CSIRO and Defence Science and Technology, reprioritised their considerable practical research expertise to critical national needs, including the supply of personal protective equipment, ventilators, and virus transmission and survivability modelling. The Australian Defence Force personnel worked with Victorian company Med-Con to increase the supply of surgical face masks.

#### Item 1.2.6

##### G20 commitment

Encourage G20 Digital Ministers to promote the application of online services and e-commerce, in accordance with national laws and regulations, to facilitate the flow of essential goods and services during the pandemic.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government is working to create new rules and norms to support digital trade, including through our Free Trade Agreement negotiations like the recently signed Australia-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement, and through co-chairing the WTO e-commerce negotiations (alongside Singapore and Japan). The Government is also supporting discussions on the Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions.

#### Item 1.2.7

##### G20 commitment

Encourage our Governments to facilitate the resumption of essential cross-border travel, in accordance with national laws and regulations, while safeguarding public health in line with our efforts to combat the pandemic as well as to minimize the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government continues exploring options to open borders with other countries as health conditions allow. We facilitated the inbound repatriation of Australian citizens and permanent residents, their immediate families and New Zealand citizens who usually reside in Australia. The government also facilitated outbound travel for foreign nationals from Australia to their home countries, and international transit through Australia, mostly to the Pacific.

In July 2021, the Australian Government released its National Plan to transition Australia’s National COVID-19 Response. Through this National Plan, the government is considering a phased reopening of Australian international borders guided by expert advice, to support economic recovery while keeping Australians, and our region, safe.

#### Item 1.2.8

##### G20 commitment

Support the efforts of international organizations (WTO, OECD, FAO, WFP etc.) to analyse the impacts of COVID-19 on global agricultural supplies, distribution chains and agri-food production and trade.

##### Australia’s response

In June 2020, together with a number of Cairns Group members, the Australian Government launched the “COVID-19 Initiative: Protecting Global Security Through Open Trade” which has a major focus on transparency. Through this Initiative we are encouraging WTO Members to self-notify their COVID-19 agriculture support measures to the WTO.

The Australian Government is currently compiling its 2019-20 report on agricultural domestic support which will include relevant support to agricultural producers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The report will be available online for WTO members to view.

Australia’s Centre for International Agricultural Research published its “Food systems security, resilience and emerging risks in the Indo-Pacific in the context of COVID-19: a rapid assessment” report.

### 1.3 Transparency

#### Item 1.3.1

##### G20 commitment

Share experiences and best practices on measures that countries have put in place at their borders at this time, with points of contact to be identified for each of our Governments within a reasonable timeline.

##### Australia’s response

Australia has consistently advocated for maximum transparency of trade measures as a member of the Ottawa Group, including a ministerial statement calling for the enhanced monitoring of trade-related measures, and its call to include trade-related economic support measures in trade monitoring reports.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, Australia has been an active participant in a wide range of multilateral fora designed to share experiences and best practices on COVID-19 responses, including in relation to border measures. We have shared lessons and expertise with our international partners, including at leaders’ level, and remain engaged with the World Health Organisation (WHO), G20, APEC, ASEAN, and within other forums to ensure a coordinated and effective global response.

#### Item 1.3.2

##### G20 commitment

Notify trade-related measures, including customs and other border operations, introduced in response to COVID-19, in accordance with our WTO obligations.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government has notified the WTO Secretariat of its trade-related measures in [goods](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/trade_related_goods_measure_e.htm), [services](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/trade_related_services_measure_e.htm) and [IP](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/trade_related_ip_measure_e.htm) taken in response to COVID-19.

### 1.4 Operations of logistics networks

#### Item 1.4.1

##### G20 commitment

Encourage G20 Transport Ministers to enhance air, land, and marine connectivity and work with the private sector to prioritize movement of essential goods in having access to freight to achieve a critical mass to maintain connectivity and safeguard jobs.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Federal, States and Territory Governments agreed to a national framework to effectively manage incoming international passenger arrivals into Australia, in response to pressures on quarantine, police and health capacity in all states and territories. Under this framework, passenger caps will apply on each international flight entering the country.

To ensure freight continues to flow across Australia through the pandemic, the Federal, States and Territory Governments agreed to the Domestic Border Controls—Freight Movements Protocol, and the Freight Movement Code. The Code includes measures enforced by State and Territories to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission and drives greater consistency in how these measures are implemented by each State and Territory.

The Australian Government is looking to deliver an infrastructure pipeline that enhances transport connectivity and will drive growth and help rebuild Australia’s economy from the COVID-19 pandemic. The government has worked closely with State, Territory, and Local governments to ensure the ongoing delivery of existing projects during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a part of this investment, the government announced an infrastructure stimulus package to help the economy bounce back from COVID-19 while ensuring safe transport connections. The Roads of Strategic Importance initiative is ensuring our key freight roads efficiently connect agricultural and mining regions to ports, airports, and other transport hubs.

#### Item 1.4.2

##### G20 commitment

Encourage G20 Transport Ministers to facilitate the increase of air cargo capacity through temporarily converting passenger aircraft into freighters to carry goods, in accordance with applicable safety and security standards.

##### Australia’s response

To help restore critical global supply chains, a temporary International Freight Assistance Mechanism (IFAM) has been funded through the Australian Government’s Relief and Recovery Fund. The government has extended its support for IFAM, helping to keep international freight routes and flights operating.

#### Item 1.4.3

##### G20 commitment

Encourage G20 Transport Ministers to make publicly accessible information regarding enforcement procedures for vehicles, drivers, and cargo or passengers and travellers, especially for quarantine areas, within a reasonable timeline, and as far as practicable.

##### Australia’s response

In April 2020, the Australian Federal, State and Territory Governments agreed on an exemption from Australia’s travel restrictions for non-cruise maritime crew. The exemption provides for the transiting to and from places of work for maritime crew, provided necessary precautions are taken. While the exemption allows for travel within and across jurisdictions with agreed documentation, maritime crew must still observe any quarantine or self-isolation requirements required by the states and territories they visit.

Through the COVID-19 pandemic, the government has worked closely with industry, regulators, and jurisdictions to ensure the efficient movement of freight and safe travel for passengers. Key achievements include developing COVID-19 principles for public transport and bus travel, ensuring truck rest stops and roadhouses remain open so truck drivers can meet their mandated fatigue requirements, and flexibility on timeframes for medical assessments.

#### Item 1.4.4

##### G20 commitment

Encourage G20 Transport Ministers to abide by international practices and guidelines to ensure the movement of goods through maritime channels, in accordance with national laws and regulations.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government supports the efforts of all countries to ensure global trade continues, including agreed arrangements to enable maritime crew changes. The government continues to work closely with Australian State and Territories, and industry, to facilitate maritime trade and crew changes.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) is taking a practical approach to enforcement of the government’s international obligations. AMSA continues to undertake ship inspections as part of its Port State Control inspection regime, to investigate complaints including in relation to seafarer welfare and repatriation, and to respond appropriately where deficiencies are identified including the detention of vessels.

### 1.5 Support for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs)

#### Item 1.5.1

##### G20 commitment

Call for international organizations to prepare in-depth reports, within their mandates, on the disruption of global value chains caused by the pandemic on MSMEs.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Productivity Commission released an Interim Report on [*Vulnerable Supply Chains*](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pc.gov.au%2Finquiries%2Fcurrent%2Fsupply-chains%23draft&data=04%7C01%7CSoma.Kone%40dfat.gov.au%7C188f986e762049dae4c308d8f27512e9%7C9b7f23b30e8347a58a40ffa8a6fea536%7C0%7C0%7C637525931928437359%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=QopkT%2BcLBFlUkExom3YMFg17kxsanFTO6jkiqVvgrzE%3D&reserved=0) on 26 March 2021. The Commission has developed a framework to identify supply chains that are vulnerable to disruption and applied it to Australian imports. The Commission has also identified strategies to manage supply chain risks and the circumstances under which government might intervene.

Australia has joined multiple Ministerial and Leaders’ statements emphasising the importance of well-functioning, resilient supply chains in the WTO.

#### Item 1.5.2

##### G20 commitment

Encourage enhancement of communication channels and networks for MSMEs, including through deepened collaboration with the private sector.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government works closely with business and peak industry bodies to foster greater collaboration with the private sector and MSMEs. We also work in international forums, such as in APEC where we led a project on “[Building Resilient Supply Chains 2020: Survey and Analysis](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Faimp2.apec.org%2Fsites%2FPDB%2FLists%2FProposals%2FDispForm.aspx%3FID%3D2595&data=04%7C01%7CSoma.Kone%40dfat.gov.au%7Ce0e72671daa44f7362fc08d8f8c5f24f%7C9b7f23b30e8347a58a40ffa8a6fea536%7C0%7C0%7C637532876342938623%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=51BRQ6oM5PgOBds5smugzxjmpDUknQ07hYAgV%2FJGHVE%3D&reserved=0)”. The project identified the levels of disruption, resilience, and adaptability of APEC’s MNCs and SMEs participating in supply chains and under the current COVID-19 pandemic and future crises; and provided informed and pertinent data analysis on how to pair the needs of businesses in supply chains with governments’ policies and recovery programs.

## 2. Longer-term collective actions

### 2.1 Supporting the multilateral trading system

#### Item 2.1.1

##### G20 commitment

Promote the necessary reform of the WTO to improve its functioning and support the role of the multilateral trading system in promoting stability and predictability of international trade flows.

##### Australia’s response

Australia remains a consistent and strong advocate of the WTO’s important role in promoting global economic growth and prosperity. The government cooperates closely with other WTO Members to promote the necessary reform of the WTO, including in the WTO itself.

Australia is also a participant in the Ottawa Group on WTO reform, and engages actively in WTO reform discussions in other multilateral and regional forums, including the G20.

#### Item 2.1.2

##### G20 commitment

Continue the discussion on how the G20 can support work at the WTO, including under the Riyadh Initiative on the Future of the WTO.

##### Australia’s response

Australia has participated actively in discussions under the Riyadh Initiative on the Future of the WTO in the Trade and Investment Working Group.

#### Item 2.1.3

##### G20 commitment

Endeavor to strengthen transparency and notify the WTO of any trade related measures taken, in accordance with our WTO obligations.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government supports efforts to strengthen transparency at the WTO. The government continues to notify the WTO Secretariat of our [trade-related measures](https://tmdb.wto.org/en) in [goods](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/trade_related_goods_measure_e.htm), [services](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/trade_related_services_measure_e.htm) and [IP](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/trade_related_ip_measure_e.htm). Australia’s most recent [Trade Policy Review](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tpr_e/tp496_e.htm) was completed virtually – an innovation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Item 2.1.4

##### G20 commitment

Work together to deliver a free, fair, inclusive, non-discriminatory, transparent, predictable, and stable trade and investment environment and to keep our markets open.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government has a long-standing commitment to liberalise trade and investment, as reflected in Australia’s multilateral, regional and bilateral commitments. For example, Australia continues to play a leadership role in the [Cairns Group](https://www.cairnsgroup.org/Pages/Introduction.aspx) in advocating for the liberalisation of global trade in agricultural exports.

#### Item 2.1.5

##### G20 commitment

Work to ensure a level playing field to foster an enabling business environment.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government is active in fostering an enabling business environment, including through efforts to level the playing field. The government’s engagement in a range of forums, including the G20, is designed to further this objective. This work is supported by the whole of government Black Economy Standing Taskforce, established to combat black economy activities, and create an even playing field for legitimate businesses.

#### Item 2.1.6

##### G20 commitment

Reaffirm the importance of interface between trade and digital economy and note the ongoing discussions under the Joint Statement Initiative on Electronic Commerce and the Moratorium on Customs Duties on Electronic Transmissions and reaffirm the need to reinvigorate the Work Program on Electronic Commerce at the WTO.

##### Australia’s response

Australia, together with co-conveners (Japan and Singapore), continue to lead discussions within the WTO Joint Statement Initiative on Electronic Commerce.

#### Item 2.1.7

##### G20 commitment

Explore COVID-19 related WTO initiatives to promote open and more resilient supply chains and expand production capacity and trade in the areas of pharmaceutical, medical, and other health-related products.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government has been an active proponent of an enhanced role for the WTO in global efforts towards the production and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and medicinal products.

Australia joined other members of the Ottawa Group on WTO reform to issue a WTO Communication ‘COVID and Beyond: Trade and Health’ at the WTO.

### 2.2 Building resilient supply chains

#### Item 2.2.1

##### G20 commitment

Support the development and sharing of best practices, specifically in terms of measures that could be taken during a global crisis to support expanding production and trade in essential goods and services, including digital trade/e-commerce.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government continues to promote open markets and rules-based trade as these continue to be our best tools to promote resilient global supply chains:  
In the WTO, Australia is supporting the Ottawa Group Trade and Health Initiative to ensure the open and transparent supply of essential medical products, including vaccines.

In APEC, Australia is advocating for open trade, efficient and resilient supply chains for essential goods, including vaccines. In 2020, Australia led the APEC Supply Chains Resilience Project, which surveyed businesses about their supply chain challenges.

Under the G20 Italian presidency, Australia is participating in discussions through the Health Working Group on promoting supply chain networks and governance in health emergency situations.

The Trade Ministers of Australia, India and Japan launched the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) in April 2021, which involves sharing best practices on supply chain resilience and holding events to provide opportunities for stakeholders to explore the possibility of diversification of their supply chains.    
Australia shared Operational Guidelines for the Facilitation of Situationally Critical Medicines and Vaccines with international partners, including in the World Customs Organization (WCO). The WCO incorporated the guidelines as an Annex in guidance to its Members.

#### Item 2.2.2

##### G20 commitment

Strengthen cooperation between authorities responsible for the regulation of trade, including customs authorities, about the issues relating to electronic document management.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government continues to work with partner countries on opportunities to streamline customs and trade processes using technology. The Australian Border Force completed a successful proof of concept trial with Singapore counterpart agencies in December 2020 of the verification of trade documents (Certificates of Origin) through the block-chain-enabled Intergovernmental Ledger (IGL). The Australian Border Force continues to pursue opportunities for further trial activity to test the scalability of the IGL as an interoperable mechanism to verify a broader range of trade documents.

#### Item 2.2.3

##### G20 commitment

Ensure the transparency and availability of trade-related information and global market information useful to MSMEs, noting inputs from the Business 20.

##### Australia’s response

Under commitments made in the 2017 *Foreign Policy White Paper*, the Australian Government has:

* strengthened public advocacy in support of our trade and investment agenda
* established a systematic high-level dialogue with business on foreign and trade policy and national security trends
* implemented measures to consult business on and address non-tariff measures
* developed a Services Exports Action Plan to boost services exports in partnership with industry and
* rolled out an Economic and Commercial Diplomacy agenda at our overseas posts and in Australia to enable more active government engagement in support of Australia’s commercial interests, including the publication of country market insights for Australian business.

#### Item 2.2.4

##### G20 commitment

Encourage connection and policies to strengthen the cooperation between multinational corporations and MSMEs, noting inputs from the Business 20.

##### Australia’s response

Through APEC’s new structural reform agenda, the Australian Government is encouraging APEC members to drive domestic economic reforms that deliver for women, Indigenous peoples, and small business owners. The government’s engagement with APEC has encouraged a closer investigation by APEC economies of the systemic barriers faced by women in trade and the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on women entrepreneurs. In 2020-21, Australia led the delivery of three online APEC courses focused on boosting women's economic empowerment, collecting, and analysing gender data, and supporting women-led small and medium enterprises to export.

In 2021, Australia will deliver eight online sessions for Indigenous MSMEs across APEC through the course ‘APEC: Growing Indigenous Businesses Through Trade (GRIT)’. The sessions provide training on export processes, as well as providing business mentorship and business matching. The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Export Council of Australia, and the Australian Indigenous Network for Investment, Trade and Export (IgNITE) are working in partnership to deliver this training.

The Australian Government is supporting New Zealand’s efforts to instil Indigenous economic empowerment within APEC’s agenda in 2021 and beyond.

Australia participated in the OECD’s Indigenous Economic Development meeting which reviewed past work by Australia, Canada, and Sweden in developing domestic policies that supported indigenous economic development, including Australia’s support to the OECD Linking Indigenous Communities with Regional Development Study. The meeting covered new and emerging priorities to shape the OECD’s forward work agenda on indigenous economic development, including calling for more direct engagement between the OECD and Indigenous leaders, and enhanced collaboration with the extensive work being undertaken by APEC on this issue. Our National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) engaged the OECD to undertake a global study in 2018, the study formally launched in March 2021.

#### Item 2.2.5

##### G20 commitment

Encourage our Governments to establish voluntary guidelines that would allow, in the event of a global health crisis, essential cross-border travel, including essential business travel, on an exceptional basis, in accordance with national laws and regulations, and without undermining efforts to safeguard public health.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government has established a transparent and streamlined system for those wishing to apply for exemptions to Australia’s border restrictions to allow essential cross-border travel, including for those working in a critical sector or engaged in specialist medical services, and certain students. There are also a range of automatic exemptions, including for immediate family members of Australian airline and maritime crews, and for those engaged in Pacific Labour programs.

### 2.3 Strengthening international investment

#### Item 2.3.1

##### G20 commitment

Recalling the voluntary G20 Guiding Principles for Global Investment Policymaking, share information on actions taken to strengthen international investment for sustainable development.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government is supporting a range of innovative approaches to strengthen capital markets and catalyse greater private finance for sustainable development in the Indo-Pacific. Including:

* The Australia Climate Finance Partnership (ACFP) will provide concessional finance to mobilise private finance for low emissions and climate resilient solutions
* The Emerging Markets Impact Investment Fund (EMIIF) will use loans and equity investments to catalyse finance for small and medium enterprises (SMEs)
* The Investing in Women initiative works with financial investors, to increase private investment flowing to women-led SMEs in South East Asia
* Supporting Private Sector Finance for Adoption (PFAN) to increase private investments in climate mitigation and adaptation that results in reduced greenhouse gas emissions and enhanced climate resilience, as well as access to modern and affordable energy in developing countries.

The partnership with Convergence is supporting the design of innovative blended finance structures that mobilise private investment to Indo-Pacific countries in sustainable and resilient infrastructure, climate, and gender equality.

#### Item 2.3.2

##### G20 commitment

Share best practices on promoting investments in sectors related to or impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Federal, States and Territory Governments have pivoted in their sectoral investment priorities to focus on advanced manufacturing, digitech and health services. Many states and territories have also introduced new programs around job creation that can provide incentives for foreign investment (e.g., NSW Government Regional Job Creation Fund).

#### Item 2.3.3

##### G20 commitment

Work together to identify key areas, such as critical medical supplies and equipment and sustainable agriculture production, where investment is needed.

##### Australia’s response

The Australian Government has committed to introducing a patent box to encourage investment in Australian medical technologies and biotech by reducing taxes on income derived from Australian medical and biotech patents in a bid to encourage businesses to undertake their research and development and keep their patents in Australia.

The government provides funding for a number of research and development programs to improve sustainability in agriculture, including training for primary producers in sustainable agricultural practices.

#### Item 2.3.4

##### G20 commitment

Encourage investment in new capacity for producing medical supplies, medical equipment, and personal protective equipment.

##### Australia’s response

During regular business, Austrade and Australian State and Territory counterparts regularly engage with industry and ecosystem stakeholders to identify, research and profile investment opportunities and activities. This work is complemented by the Global Business and Talent Attraction Taskforce, which is a whole of government initiative to attract high value business and exceptional talent to Australia as part of the governments job creation agenda.

#### Item 2.3.5

##### G20 commitment

Encourage government agencies to work with companies and investors in identifying investment opportunities and activities.

##### Australia’s response

Recognising the changing dynamics of the international investment environment, the Australian Government legislated changes to its Foreign Investment Framework. To brief investors on the changes and address any potential reform concerns, relevant Australian investment agencies (the Australian Trade and Investment Commission, the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Treasury) undertook extensive investor and stakeholder engagement to ensure they were aware of the new regime (this has been ongoing post implementation).

#### Item 2.3.6

##### G20 commitment

Encourage consultations with the private sector on their needs as necessary, as part of policy making on foreign direct investment.

##### Australia’s response

Austrade and Australian States and Territory counterparts have pivoted in their sectoral priorities to focus on advanced manufacturing, digitech and health services. Many states and territories have also introduced new programs around job creation that can provide incentives for foreign investment.

The Australian Government undertook extensive consultations with stakeholders on the review of Australia's bilateral investment treaties (BITs) to ascertain stakeholder interests.

#### Item 2.3.7

##### G20 commitment

Encourage cooperation on technical assistance and capacity building provided to developing and least developed countries on investment promotion.

##### Australia’s response

Australia is the lead donor of PACER Plus’s development and economic cooperation package. PACER Plus is a regional development-centred trade agreement designed to support Pacific cooperation and increase activity in regional and global trade in goods, services, investment, movement of natural persons and development and economic cooperation. The PACER Plus package funds a work program of project-based and technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of developing Pacific members to maximise their ability to benefit from the trade agreement.